

## IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-21 (Canceled).

- 22 (New).     An apparatus comprising:
- a silicon substrate;
  - a barrier layer over said silicon substrate;
  - a trench etched into said substrate through said barrier layer;
  - a dielectric in said trench; and
  - a plurality of ions implanted into said dielectric layer and said barrier layer, said substrate being substantially free of said ions.
- 23 (New).     The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the dielectric comprises silicon oxide.
- 24 (New).     The apparatus of claim 22 wherein said dielectric is damaged by said implanted ions.
- 25 (New).     The apparatus of claim 22 wherein said barrier layer is formed of silicon nitride.
- 26 (New).     The apparatus of claim 22 wherein said ions are selected from the group consisting of silicon, carbon, nitrogen, and oxygen.
- 27 (New).     The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the upper surface of said barrier layer and said dielectric are coplanar.